

PIUTE COUNTY (UTAH). COUNTY COMMISSION

[1526]

MINUTES, 1869-[ongoing]

DESCRIPTION: These minute books record the actions of the county commission (known during the territorial period as the county court), the governing body of the county. The commission was authorized to manage all county business and county property. This includes budgeting, equipment purchasing, and auditing; use of county lands; districting for schools, roads, voting, etc.; taxing, specifically acting as an ex- officio board of equalization; business licensing; arranging for the construction of roads, public buildings, etc.; contracting for services; supervising the conduct and payment of all county personnel; providing for basic health care, public safety, and care of the indigent; canvassing election returns and appointing certain officials; incorporating municipalities; and by the late 1960s, planning and zoning. All these activities are noted in the minutes with each day's entries prefaced by date, names of those present, and where and when they met.

Following the formation of territorial government, the legislature in 1852 passed acts relating to the formation and government of counties. There were no county commissions, but the probate judge in conjunction with the county selectmen were invested "with the usual powers and jurisdiction of County Commissioners" and as such were known as the county court. The probate court clerk (also known as the county clerk) was to keep the records of the court. This same structure was followed by Piute County upon its organization in April 1869. With statehood in 1896 an actual board of county commissioners was created. The probate judge was removed, but the selectmen continued serving as commissioners until elections were held. The county clerk remained the clerk of the board, recording the minutes. The previous responsibilities were maintained and expanded.

The principal activity noted in the minutes is the monitoring of the fiscal health of the county. Bills submitted for the purchase of supplies and services are recorded at most meetings. By the 1950s, proposed annual budgets are presented in detail. The county commission assessed

taxes and served as a board of equalization, adjusting assessments of individual property. The commissioners appointed and oversaw numerous county, district and precinct officials. They financed the care of the indigent and insane; relief projects were common topics in the 1930s.

The commissioners created school districts and road districts. A major responsibility noted throughout the minutes is the lay out of roads and bridges. The commissioners served as canvassers of elections, also appointing election officers, setting the boundaries of voting districts, and assigning polling places. They approved the incorporation of towns and licensed businesses. Commissioners provided for building public buildings. They oversaw the resources of the county, allowing bounties on varmints and appointing fish and game wardens, bee inspectors, crop pest inspectors, and weed inspectors.

A major addition to county commission functions was made in 1941 when the commission was empowered to provide for the development and zoning of unincorporated areas of the county and to appoint a planning commission. Piute County began zoning in 1967. In the 1950s, the commission organized a civil defense program and a recreation program emphasizing obtaining and maintaining television transmission. In the 1960s, Piute County also joined with other rural counties to form the Six County Development Program, a cooperative venture to provide irrigation, recreation, and health programs for the county.

In 1976 the Piute County Commission appointed a Senior Citizen's Board to assist in providing for the special needs of the elderly. The commission added supervision of this board to its list of ongoing responsibilities, which included coordinating with the Bureau of Land Management to manage the wilderness area in Piute County; managing health care services, including an ambulance and a county nurse; maintaining county roads and bridges, including controlling weeds along the roadways; managing public services such as television and the bookmobile; providing law enforcement; providing appropriate county insurances; maintaining public buildings; assessing and collecting taxes; and dealing with ongoing equalization issues. The county commission has responsibility for appointing election judges, and since 1978 commission minutes have included election results in Piute County for primary and general elections.

ARRANGEMENT: The minutes are arranged chronologically by date of meeting.

RESEARCH NOTE: Given the diversity and extent of the county commission's activities, the minute books should be consulted not only by researchers seeking information on the commission, but by those seeking information on any county agencies, their personnel, or their services to individuals; on private contractors and their plans for work on county projects or private subdivisions; on private businesses operating within the unincorporated county limits; and on private individuals or charitable institutions holding taxable or untaxable property within the county. Virtually any person living in, or any activity taking place in, unincorporated areas of Piute county (up to and including the incorporation or disincorporation of municipalities) was affected by the activities of the county commission

and is reflected in the minutes.

Minutes on reel 6 are preceded by a copy of the "Uniform Fiscal Procedures Act for Counties."

RELATED RECORDS: While the minutes summarize the meetings of the commission, many other county agencies recorded the particulars. Thus the other holdings of the county commission and other Piute county agencies should be consulted. Series 85241, ORDINANCES, records the laws enacted by the commission.

PROCESSING NOTE: The first volume, which had been previously filmed by the county, was refilmed in January 2002 as part of Utah State Archives Millennial Project. The second volume was filmed in 1966 by the LDS Genealogical Society, and the next four volumes by the Utah State Archives in 1982 and 1983. The series was processed by A.C. Cone in April 1996. Reel 83754 was cut to remove a partial filming of the 1962-1975 volume which was filmed in full later on the reel. Minutes for September 1975-December 1999 were also microfilmed as part of the Millennial Project and the inventory was updated in March 2002.

PREFERRED CITATION: Cite the Utah State Archives and Records Service, the creating agency name, the series title, and the series number.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description	Volume
1	1869, Apr 21-1874, Sep 7	A
2	1872, Sep 2-1908, Nov 9	B
3	1908, Dec 8-1922, Aug 22	C
4	1922, Sep 7-1942, Oct 20	D
5	1942, Nov 2-1975, Aug 4	D
6	1975, Sep 4-1999, Dec 13	